

Crack-in-Rock

General Hike Information

Activity Description

The roundtrip hike to Crack-in-Rock Pueblo and the nearby rock art is a two-day backpacking trip in an isolated area of Wupatki National Monument. Crack-in-Rock is a 12th Century Ancestral Puebloan site located on a mesa top. Numerous prehistoric and historic archeological sites are located along the way. These and other features will be discussed by the Wupatki National Monument staff member leading the hike.

Terrain

The hike is approximately 16 miles round-trip over rough desert terrain at an elevation of approximately 4,500-4,900 feet. The route is cross-country; there is no designated trail. Hiking surfaces are uneven and vary from loose cinder to sandstone and limestone outcrops and talus slopes. Although overall elevation gain or loss is minimal, portions of the route include hiking in and out of washes and hilly areas. Please note that this is a rigorous hike over difficult terrain. There is minimal shade along the way. The vegetation, although sparse in many locations, can be thorny and sharp.

Weather

Weather can be extremely variable at Wupatki during the months of April and October. Temperatures can range from lows in the 20s-60s to highs in the 30s-90s, with average lows in the 40s, and highs in the 70s. While temperatures are inconsistent from one day to the next, a 30-degree difference between daytime and nighttime temperatures is generally the rule. Expect windy conditions which can often make balancing a heavy pack difficult. Snow and/or rain can occur in both April and October at Wupatki.

Level of Difficulty

This hike is strenuous. Travel is over challenging terrain; there are no trails. This is high desert country so no water is available at the campsite or along the way. Each hiker must carry a minimum of one gallon of water per person per day. Therefore, an empty pack will weigh a minimum of 16 pounds (8 pounds per gallon), plus the weight of the pack. After figuring in food, stove, tent, sleeping pad, and other needed equipment, a full pack can easily weigh 30 or 40 pounds or more. All hike participants must have the physical ability to hike in extreme temperatures over difficult terrain, and be able to carry their full pack for the complete duration of 16 miles.

How can I sign-up?

The cost of this ranger guided activity is \$50.00 per person (payable when selected to participate). Group size is limited to 15 people, including staff. Hikes are led up to four weekends in April and four weekends in October. Because the group size is small, and demand high, a lottery is held to select participants. If you would like to put your name in the lottery or would like further information call the Wupatki National Monument Visitor Center at (928) 679-2365.